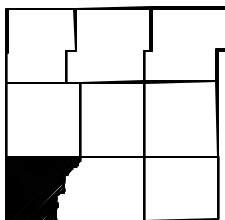


# Facilities & Services Needs Assessment: Decatur Township



Colorful gardens and signs welcome visitors to Decatur Township. These gardens are located at the gateway to the township at I-465 & SR-67 and are a project of the Decatur Garden Friends.



July 1, 1999  
Department of Metropolitan Development  
Division of Planning

## **INDIANAPOLIS-MARION COUNTY**

Stephen Goldsmith, Mayor

### **CITY-COUNTY COUNCIL**

Carlton Curry - *at large*

Ron Franklin - *at large*

Gordon Gilmer - *District #1*

Monroe Gray, Jr. - *District #9*

W. Tobin McClamroch - *at large*

Marilyn Moores - *at large*

Beurt SerVaas - *District #2*

### **METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

John S. Beeman

Lance Bundles

Lillian Charleston

James Curtis, Sr.

Gene Hendricks

Walter Niemczura

Steve Schaefer

Robert Smith

Randolph Snyder

### **DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT**

Eugene Lausch, Director

Jason Holliday, Decatur Township  
Administrator

### **DIVISION OF PLANNING**

Thomas Bartlett, Administrator

Keith Holdsworth

Sheila McKinley

Kevin Grosse

### **FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS**

Pat Andrews - *Decatur Township Civic  
Council*

Trent Bennett - *Ameriplex Business  
Association*

Kathie Chudyk - *Decatur Township  
Public Library*

Robert Cockrum - *City-County Council,  
District #19*

Charles Coleman - *Decatur Township  
Assessor*

Dale Henson - *Decatur Township Fire  
Department Chief*

Angela Kurz - *Decatur Central High  
School Student*

Chester Mann - *Decatur Township  
Business Association*

Rex Sager - *MSD Decatur Township*

# FACILITIES & SERVICES NEEDS ASSESSMENT: DECATUR TOWNSHIP

The Facilities and Services Needs Assessment is a master list of facilities and services with supporting maps and figures. This is not a plan that shows what facility or service should be located where. It is an assessment that looks at:

- current supply of the township's facilities and services;
- current demand for facilities and services;
- likely future levels of demand based on projected population; and
- a comparison of supply and demand to determine need.

The Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) in 1991 adopted the existing comprehensive land use plan for Decatur Township. This Assessment is not an update of the land use plan; it will not make land use recommendations for specific parcels of land. However, the information contained in this assessment will provide background information that will be critical to the next comprehensive land use plan update.

## Issues Explored

### *Population scenarios*

Many service providers allocate their services based on the number of persons to be served or upon some other demographic factor such as age or income. To be able to make the best allocations, good demographic projections are needed.

### *Supply of facilities and services*

A simple formula for determining the need for additional facilities and service is the demand minus the supply equals the unmet need (Demand - Supply = Need). The various service providers will have different ways of measuring supply. It may

be by number of facilities, by acres, by number of staff persons or by some other method. Determination of current supply is one of the most important pieces of background information to be collected.

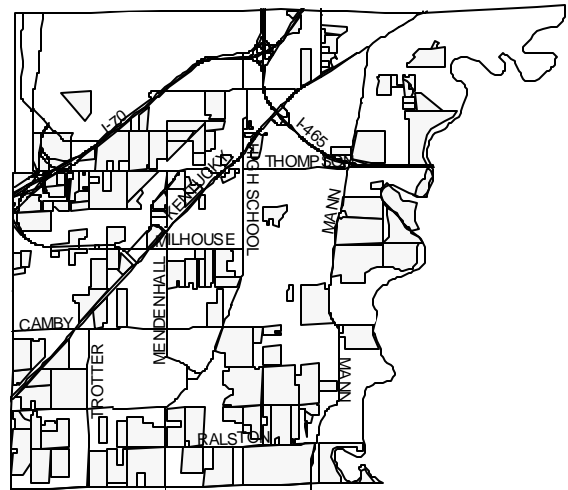
### *Demand for facilities and services*

Demand can be measured in a variety of ways and is a vital part of the assessment. The assessment will determine and report on both the current demand and projected future demand.

## Decatur Township

Decatur Township is predominantly rural in character. Open, undeveloped space is still a commonplace sight. However, Decatur is beginning to experience a significant growth in population and is seeing a tremendous shift in land use from agriculture to residential and industrial development. While land resources are still available, it is a good time to prepare a Facilities and Services Needs Assessment for Decatur Township.

*Undeveloped land (shaded areas) in Decatur Township. (Division of Planning, 1997)*





## BACKGROUND RESEARCH

### Evaluation of existing plans

Existing plans for Decatur Township have been evaluated to provide background information and serve as a jumping-off point for this Assessment. The plans evaluated are:

- Decatur Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan;
- Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan;
- Airport Industrial Development Plan;
- Indianapolis Marion County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan; and
- Indianapolis Greenways Plan.

#### *Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1991)*

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan is a detailed plan that guides development for Decatur Township and outlines the necessary steps to action. It recommends land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, parks, or special uses), lists Thoroughfare Plan priority improvements for township roads, and identifies critical areas in the township that need special consideration.

Decatur Township's planning and development goals are:

- Increase the amount of retail shopping, medical and social services available to the township residents;
- Encourage integrated industrial park development;
- Balance the amount and type of residential land uses;
- Enable the school system to keep pace with the growing school-age population;
- Enable the transportation, sewer and water service and drainage systems to be improved and expanded as necessary to meet demands;
- Expand the park system to meet open space and recreational needs; and

- Improve the aesthetic quality of the White River and the primary "gateways" to the township, such as State Road 67, particularly at I-465.

The Plan recommends very low-density residential development to complement the township's rural character and protect the township's environmentally sensitive areas such as woodlands, wetlands, and flood hazard areas. The Plan also recommends establishing a linear park along the White River and Goose Creek.

The Plan recommends new developments occur in areas with adequate infrastructure (schools, roads, sewer and water systems) but not over burdening existing facilities.

The Plan recommends additional commercial and industrial development adjacent to the airport, interstate, arterial roads and railroads. The Plan also encourages development through the establishment of an Economic Development Area, which was designated in April 1991.

#### *The Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan (1996)*

The Thoroughfare Plan identifies and proposes major road improvements needed to accommodate forecasted traffic demand in 2020. In Decatur Township, the Thoroughfare Plan recommends the following priority improvements:

- Widen Kentucky Avenue from 4 to 6 lanes between I-465 and Camby Road;
- Add a new interchange at I-70 and Six Points Road;
- Relocate and expand I-70 from 6 to 8 lanes between I-465 and Six Points Road; and
- Widen Six Points Road from 2 to 4 lanes.

The expansion of Kentucky Avenue is scheduled for construction in 2002. The new interchange, relocation and expansion of I-70 and Six Points Road is scheduled for construction in 2004.

### ***Airport Industrial Development Plan (1990)***

The purpose of the Airport Industrial Development Plan is to ensure coordinated, high quality development. The plan addresses the area south of the Indianapolis International Airport, roughly bounded by I-70, I-465 and SR 67. The goals identified in the plan are as follows:

- Minimize or eliminate noise-incompatible land uses;
- Optimize use of airport vicinity land for uses requiring immediate airport access;
- Optimize use of the plan area for compatible industrial uses or other non-noise-impacted land uses;
- Return as much land as possible from airport ownership to private ownership and subsequent inclusion on the Decatur Township property tax rolls;
- Facilitate orderly, compatible development that will increase land values both within the plan area and in adjacent areas; and
- Provide a more detailed land use plan for the area as an updated segment of the Comprehensive Plan.

Airport related industrial and commercial land uses are recommended as well as other light and general industrial land uses, neighborhood shopping center, open space and a small area of low-density residential housing.

### ***Indianapolis Marion County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (1999)***

This plan provides guidance to decision-makers in the form of basic information, goals and recommendations for the city's parks and recreation system.

Indianapolis Parks and Recreation (Indy Parks) operates two parks within Decatur Township: Carson Park and Southwestway Park/Winding River Golf Course. Although Decatur Township's park facilities and acreage is in proportion to its population, the township has no Indy Parks

swimming pools or recreation centers. As a result, some of the park and recreational needs are met by parks in other townships such as Krannert and Thatcher Parks in Wayne Township, Garfield and Rhodius Parks in Center Township, Perry Park in Perry Township, Eagle Creek Park in Pike Township and Pioneer Park in Mooresville.

To further the goal of acquiring adequate parkland for Decatur Township, eleven potential park sites have been identified with a total acreage of 1051. Nine of these sites are currently zoned for very low-density residential development, six remain undeveloped and the remaining five are partially developed. Many of the sites are identified as a "very high" or "high" priority for acquisition, however none of the sites have yet been acquired for parkland.

### ***Indianapolis Greenways Plan (1994)***

The Indianapolis Greenways Plan describes the community's vision for an interconnected regional network of open space that supports and promotes recreation, fitness, and conservation.

In Decatur Township, the Plan emphasizes the greenways potential along the White River. The city has acquired much of the undeveloped land along the southern stretch of the river to create a 357-acre regional park and golf course. Elsewhere on the river, private ownership combined sewer overflows and illegal dumping limit access. The Greenways Plan identifies potential locations for new parks, public boat launches, fishing sites, recreational trails, wetland restoration and historically significant sites along the White River.

## DEVELOPMENT OF POPULATION SCENERIOS

Decatur Township's population experienced substantial growth during the 1960s and 1970s. The 1980s however, brought about a period of much slower growth than the previous two decades. Housing permit data available for 1997 indicates that the population in Decatur Township is growing at a faster rate than during the 1980s.

Population projections for this assessment look at the year 2020 and at build-out population. Build-out population is the number of people living in Decatur Township in the year when every piece of property has been developed.

The projections are based on the premise that development will occur as shown in the 1991 Decatur Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan (with modifications for any recent developments that may have occurred differently than the plan recommended). Other assumptions used to develop the projections are that the average household size in Decatur Township will remain the 1990 Census value of 2.87 persons/household and that average building densities in each residential zoning category will remain unchanged.

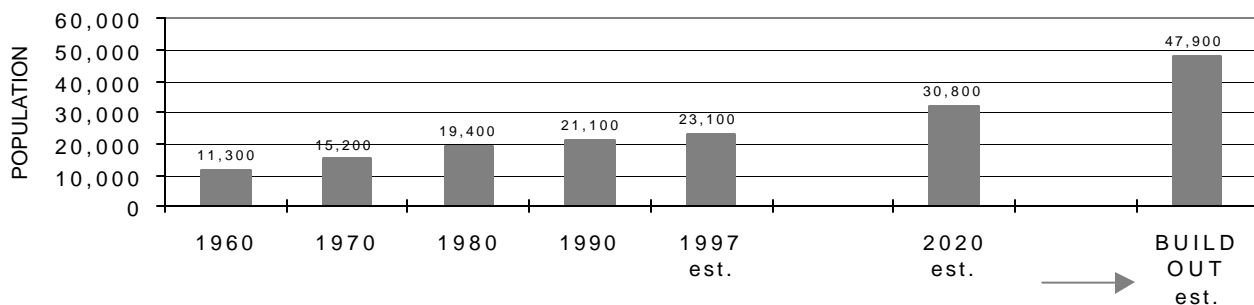
Determining when full build-out might occur is difficult due to the number of variables. The economy, changing demographics, and provision of roads, sewers, water and other infrastructure all have a major impact on rate of development.

Three projections were used to estimate the 2020 population for Decatur Township. These are: cohort-survival method (25,200 population), employment-based method (24,750 population), and the land use method (31,800 population)

The cohort-survival method considers births, deaths and migration. The employment-based projection calculates population generated by future employment growth and distribution. The land use method is based on the percent change in population using recent census figures, housing permits and comprehensive plan recommendations.

The tables used throughout this assessment use the land use method for estimating the 2020 population. This method was selected because the projection indicates modest growth over the twenty-year period, rather than minimal growth as seen in the other methods. With a significant amount of undeveloped land in Decatur Township, the city can anticipate further growth in the area. Plus, the twenty-year time frame of this assessment provides adequate time for a possible economic downturn and rebound.

*Historic and Projected Population for Decatur Township (Division of Planning, 1999)*



## EXPLORATION OF STANDARDS FOR FACILITIES & SERVICES

Local, state and national sources were researched to determine what standards currently exist for the provision of services and facilities. These standards were then applied to Decatur Township as shown in the charts in the following pages.

Planning standards should not be the only method used for devising the demand for services and facilities in a community. Each community has distinctive needs that should be kept in mind throughout the planning process. Standards do not account for the “diverse conditions, populations, and values of Urban America” (Gold, Seymour. *Recreation Planning & Design*. McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1980). They can be useful guidelines to follow when developing future plans, but only when the inherent limitations of standards are understood.

The use of standards to determine need for services and facilities have limitations. One limitation is the age of the standard and data being used. Standards can become outdated because people’s preferences change over time.

Typically standards are not localized. Most standards are set at a national level and do not take into account factors that may affect the use of the standard at a local level.

The source of a standard can be a consideration. If a standard is issued from an organization that would benefit from the increased need of a service, the standard may be artificially high.

Some standards are not well defined. They can be construed to mean different things. For example, the standard for Emergency Medical Services requires one vehicle per 1.5 mile radius. However the type of vehicles is not defined. Whether the

standard is for ambulances only, or a combination of ambulances, paramedic vehicles, and extraction vehicles, is not specified. This can cause a problem when defining what is really needed in an area.

Marion County’s townships are not walled-in communities that must provide all of their own services and facilities. Consumers of services and facilities are able to easily cross-township boundaries to seek many of their needs. Also facilities located in Decatur Township frequently serve persons from outside the township and vice-versa. However, in Marion County the townships are readily known geographic units and provide a easy way to think about issues that may be variable across the county.

### Localization

Many of the facility and service standards are nationally based and should be considered only as a guide. The uniqueness of every town, city and county, with their differing socioeconomic, climatic, geographic and cultural characteristics, makes it undesirable to apply all standards in the same manner in every community. In this assessment, localization of the standards was attempted through a public survey, a focus group and public meeting.

### *Residential & Business Survey*

IUPUI’s Polis Center and Public Opinion Laboratory conducted a community survey for the Division of Planning. Twelve hundred residents and 600 businesses in Marion County were randomly selected to participate in a telephone survey. The residential survey is statistically significant at both the county and township level. The business survey is only statistically significant at the county level.

A representative sample of 36 Decatur Township residents was surveyed. Among the Decatur



Township responses, school and library facilities as well as fire and police services were rated “excellent or good”. However, parks and recreation facilities were rated “poor” (Table 1).

### ***Focus Group Meeting***

Representatives from key public service providers and neighborhood organizations in Decatur Township were invited to participate in a focus group discussion on May 20, 1999. Nine of the fifteen invited were able to attend.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the adequacy of current facilities and services, how the various service and facility providers determine the appropriate level of service and how they plan to meet the needs of the growing population.

The focus group concluded that parks and recreation facilities, roadways and facilities for young people were the most pressing issues in Decatur Township. New residential and

commercial development, the expansion of the airport and range of housing types were factors that would have the greatest influence on Decatur Township over the next 10 years.

### ***Public Meeting***

A public meeting was held on June 28, 1999 to discuss the Facilities and Services Needs Assessment. Thirty-five Decatur Township residents attended the meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to present the information collected to date and gauge the public perceptions of the adequacy of the public facilities and services.

Issues discussed at the public meeting complimented the findings of the telephone survey and comments made by the focus group. Concern was raised over the number and type of homes currently being built and the impact this will have on the existing streets, sewer, water, fire, police, schools and park system.

*Table 1*

<b>SURVEY RESULTS</b>		
	Percent rating this service or facility as excellent or good	
	Decatur Township Residents	Marion County Residents (Businesses)
Schools	81%	71% (Businesses 60%)
Libraries	81%	76%
Parks	35%	63%
Fire Services	86%	91% (Businesses 89%)
Law Enforcement	65%	70% (Businesses 81%)
Emergency Room Care	66%	71%
In-Patient Hospital Care	88%	81%
Out-Patient Hospital Care	77%	80%
	Percent rating the provision of this service or facility as adequate	
Youth Services	50%	46%
Affordable Housing	76%	57% (Businesses 59%)
Elderly Housing	62%	55%
	Percent rating as very to somewhat important in new developments	
Light Rail or Bus Service	78%	88% (Businesses 54%)
Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes	77%	81% (Businesses 75%)
Streets Connecting Subdivisions	83%	71% (Businesses 58%)
Sidewalks on Major Streets	83%	90% (Businesses 87%)

## FACILITIES & SERVICES ASSESSED

The following is a summary of issues discussed in the focus group and public meetings, results from the needs assessment survey and planning standards used to determine the adequacy of public services and facilities. The issues include education, library, parks and recreation, safety, and medical. Several additional issues were raised that are specific to Decatur Township. These include: new development, entertainment, daycare, youth services and mass transit.

### *Education Facilities*

The current trend in education planning is the use of performance standards as the primary service level measurement tool.

The United States Department of Education emphasizes performance statistics to provide a picture of how well local educational systems are doing. Examples of this type of this measurement are student attendance, academic achievement and graduation rates. Although these are worthy tools, they do not measure resource requirements, which what the following table attempts to do (Table 2).

Decatur Township has four elementary schools, one middle and one high school. Fifty-three percent of the needs assessment survey respondents from Decatur Township rated the schools as “excellent or good” (Table 1).

According to the standards, the school system in Decatur Township has sufficient classroom space, certified teaching staff and acreage (Table 2).

Table 2

EDUCATION STANDARDS							
	Standard	Current Township Need (23,100 people)	Current Township Supply	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Elem. School Classrooms	1 classroom/ 24 students	93 class.	115 class.	+ 22 class.	92 class.	142 class.	A/B
Elem. School Certified Staff	1 staff/ 22 students	102 staff	108 staff	+ 6 staff	101 staff	155 staff	A/B
Elem. School Acreage	7 acres + 1 acres/100 pupils over 200	26 acres	45 acres	+ 19 acres	27 acres	39 acres	A/E
Mid. School Classrooms	1 classroom/ 25 students	48 class.	72 class.	+ 24 class.	86 class.	134 class.	A/B
Mid. School Certified Staff	1 staff/ 20 students	60 staff	64 staff	+ 4 staff	101 staff	166 staff	A/B
Mid. School Acreage	15 acres + 1 acres/100 pupils over 450	23 acres	21 acres	- 2 acres	32 acres	44 acres	A/E
High School Classrooms	1 classrooms/ 26 students	52 class.	67 class.	+ 15 class.	116 class.	179 class.	A/B
High School Certified Staff	1 staff/ 19 students	72 staff	87 staff	+ 15 staff	159 staff	245 staff	A/B
High School Acreage	20 acres + 1 acres/100 pupils over 600	28 acres	109 acres	+ 81 acres	44 acres	61 acres	A/E
A. Burchell, Robert W. et. al., <i>Development Impact</i> . Washington, DC: URL-the Urban Land Institute, 1994. B. Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township Superintendent. April 1999. E. Indiana State Board of Education School Facility Guidelines. September 1997.							

### ***Library Facilities***

The Indianapolis-Marion County Library has divided the entire county into library districts. One district or library serves Decatur Township. The library in Decatur Township was rated as “excellent or good” by the survey respondents (Table 1).

The national standards indicate that the Decatur Library does not have sufficient book stock, checked out material and building square footage to adequately serve the current population (Table 3). However, Decatur Library has numerous paperbacks that are not counted as part of their book stock.

According to library staff, a greater number of items are checked in than checked out. This may be attributed to the popularity of the inter-library

loan system, on-line database, and access to other libraries throughout the county that may more convenient to work or other activities for library patrons.

The Decatur Library works closely with the middle and elementary schools throughout the township. In fact, the library’s summer reading program for elementary students continues to exceed enrollment projections.

Although Decatur Library is well situated on a site that will allow for future expansion, the library’s location off Kentucky Avenue may discourage patrons that do not have access to an automobile. If the library had safer and better routes through neighboring subdivisions, more patrons may use the library facility.

Table 3

LIBRARY STANDARDS							
	Standard	Current Township Need (23,100 people)	Current Township Supply	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Library book Stock	2.75 books/person	63,525 books	40,227 books	-23,298 books	84,700 books	131,725 books	A/C/D
Library book circulation	9 items checked/ person/year	207,900 checked	186,377 checked	-21,523 checked	277,200 checked	431,100 checked	A/C/D
Library space	0.6 sq. ft./person	13,860 sq. ft.	11,300 sq. ft.	-2,560 sq. ft.	18,480 sq. ft.	28,740 sq. ft.	A/C
A. Burchell, Robert W. et. al., <i>Development Impact</i> . Washington, DC: URL-the Urban Land Institute, 1994.							
C. Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library., <i>Strategic Master Plan for Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library 1996 through 2004</i> . 1998.							
D. Indianapolis-Marion County Library Staff. March 1999.							

### ***Parks and Recreation Facilities***

Decatur Township has two parks: Carson Park and Southwestway Park/Winding River Golf Course. Carson Park is a 22-acre neighborhood park that is crowded with soccer fields, baseball diamonds, tennis and basketball courts, as well as picnic facilities. Southwestway Park is a 357-acre regional park that contains a golf course, playground, picnic area, soccer and baseball fields as well as natural areas.

In 1998, Indy Parks surveyed residents of Decatur Township and found that 87% of the respondents identified a need for additional parks. Survey results for this needs assessment were similar, 65% of Decatur Township respondents found the existing park facilities to be “fair or poor” (Table 1). The focus group identified the need for an outdoor pool, more baseball diamonds and a trail system for jogging or bicycling.

Indy Parks has compiled a set of standards for park development and assessment in Marion County. According to these standards, Decatur Township does not have sufficient park facilities to accommodate the current population (Table 4). Indy Parks has identified potential park sites, however has not acquired any additional property. These same standards are applied to the outdoor

recreational facilities at the public schools (Table 5). If the school facilities are combined with the existing park facilities, the current supply improves dramatically (Table 6). However, even with the school and park facilities combined additional parks will need to be developed in order to serve the growing population in Decatur Township.

Participants of both the focus group and public meeting expressed their interest in a reservoir, water park or community swimming pool. It was also suggested that Indy Parks explore a 25-year lease option on some of the vacant land around the Airport.

Cemeteries are not typically considered parks however, they do provide open space and allow for passive recreation uses such as walking and bird watching. In Decatur Township the additional acreage provided by the existing cemeteries for park uses is not significant according to the Indy Parks standards.

West Newton Cemetery is the only remaining active cemetery in Decatur Township. Based on projected death rates for Decatur Township and state burial trends there seems to be adequate space well into 2020 to accommodate those wishing to be buried locally (Table 4).

Table 4

PARKS AND RECREATION STANDARDS							
	Standard	Current Township Need (23,100 people)	Current Township Supply	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Neighborhood Parks	1.3 acres/ 1000 pop.	30 acres	24 acres	- 6 acres	40 acres	62 acres	F
Community (Magnet) Parks	6 acres/ 1000 pop.	139 acres	0 acres	- 139 acres	185 acres	287 acres	F
Regional Parks	10 acres/ 1000 pop.	231 acres	205 acres	- 26 acres	308 acres	479 acres	F
Playgrounds	1 play./ 2500 pop.	9 play.	2 play.	- 7 play.	12 play.	19 play.	F
Basketball courts (outdoor)	1 court/ 5000 pop.	5 courts	2 courts	- 3 courts	6 courts	10 courts	F
Tennis courts	1 court/ 2000 pop.	12 courts	0 courts	- 12 courts	15 courts	24 courts	F
Baseball diamonds	1 court/ 5000 pop.	5 diamonds	10 diamonds	+ 5 diamonds	6 diamonds	10 diamonds	F
Football fields	1 field/ 20,000 pop.	1 field	0 field	- 1 field	2 fields	2 fields	F
Soccer fields	1 field/ 10,000 pop.	2 fields	3 fields	+ 1 field	3 fields	5 fields	F
Softball diamonds	1 diamond/ 5000 pop.	5 diamonds	0 diamonds	- 5 diamonds	6 diamonds	10 diamonds	F
Golf course	9 holes/ 25,000 pop.	8 holes	18 holes	+ 10 holes	11 holes	17 holes	F
Outdoor swimming pools	1 pool/ 20,000 pop.	1 pool	0 pool	- 1 pool	2 pools	2 pools	F
Picnic shelters	1 shelter/ 5000 pop.	5 shelters	3 shelters	-2 shelters	6 shelters	10 shelters	F
Trails	0.15 mile/ 1000 pop.	3 miles	0 miles	- 3 miles	5 miles	7 miles	F
Recreation centers	1 center/ 50,000 pop.	0.5 centers	0 centers	- 0.5 centers	0.6 centers	1 center	F
Cemeteries	800 graves/ 1 acres	0.5 acres	8 acres	+ 7.5 acres	5 acres	+ 1 acre annually	K
F. Indianapolis Parks and Recreation (Indy Parks). <i>Comprehensive Parks Plan Update</i> . 1999							
K. Indiana Cemetery Association, 1999.							

Table 5

SCHOOL OUTDOOR RECREATION STANDARDS							
	Standard	Current Township Need (23,100 people)	Current Township Supply	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Playgrounds	1 play./ 2500 pop.	9 play.	5 play.	- 4 play.	12 play.	19 play.	F/G
Basketball courts (outdoor)	1 court/ 5000 pop.	5 courts	6 courts (5 parking lot)	+ 1 court	6 courts	10 courts	F/G
Tennis courts	1 court/ 2000 pop.	12 courts	5 courts	- 7 courts	15 courts	24 courts	F/G
Baseball diamonds	1 diamond/ 5000 pop.	5 diamonds	5 diamonds	+ 0 diamonds	6 diamonds	10 diamonds	F/G
Football fields	1 field/ 20,000 pop.	1 field	2 fields	+ 1 field	2 fields	2 fields	F/G
Soccer fields	1 field/ 10,000 pop.	2 fields	1 fields	- 1 field	3 fields	5 fields	F/G
Softball diamonds	1 diamond/ 5000 pop.	5 diamonds	1 diamond	- 4 diamonds	6 diamonds	10 diamonds	F/G
F. Indianapolis Parks and Recreation (Indy Parks). <i>Comprehensive Parks Plan Update</i> . 1999.							
G. Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township (field observation). March 1999.							

Table 6

PARKS AND RECREATION / SCHOOL OUTDOOR RECREATION							
	Standard	Current Township Need (23,100 people)	Current Township Supply	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Playgrounds	1 play./ 2500 pop.	9 play.	7 play.	- 2 play.	12 play.	19 play.	F/G
Outdoor basketball courts	1 court/ 5000 pop.	5 courts	8 courts (5 parking lot)	+ 3courts	6 courts	10 courts	F/G
Tennis courts	1 court/ 2000 pop.	12 courts	5 courts	- 7 courts	15 courts	24 courts	F/G
Baseball diamonds	1 diamond/ 5000 pop.	5 diamonds	15 diamonds	+ 10 diamonds	6 diamonds	10 diamonds	F/G
Football fields	1 field/ 20,000 pop.	1 field	2 fields	+ 1 fields	2 fields	2 fields	F/G
Soccer fields	1 field/ 10,000 pop.	2 fields	4 fields	+ 2 fields	3 fields	5 fields	F/G
Softball diamonds	1 diamond/ 5000 pop.	5 fields	1 field	- 4 fields	6 fields	10 fields	F/G
F. Indianapolis Parks and Recreation (Indy Parks). <i>Comprehensive Parks Plan Update</i> . 1999.							
G. Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township (field observation). March 1999.							

## Public Safety

The recent development in Decatur Township has heightened the need for additional career fire, EMS and police personnel and facilities to meet current demand.

According to the responses from the needs assessment survey, Decatur Township residents found the current fire and police service to be “excellent or good” (Table 1).

Although mutual support agreements exist between neighboring townships and counties, the national standards for EMS, fire and police personnel and facilities indicate that there is not a adequate number of professional staff and police facilities to serve the current population in Decatur Township (Table 7). These numbers include the additional 9 full-time staff hired by the fire department in July 1999.

Decatur Township depends heavily on its 57 active volunteer fire fighters for evening and weekend calls. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, a rule of thumb for volunteer fire fighters is 3 volunteers equals 1 full-time staff. Using this rule of thumb, Decatur Township has an adequate fire fighting/EMS staff. In Decatur Township, both the volunteer and career fire fighting staff are trained in EMS/BLS (basic life support) techniques.

The Marion County Sheriff’s department predominantly responds to emergencies in Decatur Township. Other than the fire stations, there is not a facility within Decatur Township for the police officers but there is a police station in Wayne Township.

The Indiana State Police training facility headquarters is located in the Ameriplex development. However, these officers would not typically respond to a local call.

Table 7

PUBLIC SAFETY STANDARDS							
	Standard	Current Township Need (23,100 people)	Current Township Supply	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Fire & EMS Personnel	1.65 full-time/ 1,000 pop.	38 staff	18 staff (+ 57 active volunteers)	- 20 staff (+1 @ 3 volunteers= 1 staff)	51 staff	79 staff	L
Fire Vehicles	1 engine/ 1.5 mile radius 1 ladder/ 2.5 mile radius	6 vehicles (4 engines & 2 ladder)	6 vehicles (5 engines & 1 tanker)	0 vehicles	7 vehicles (5 engines & 2 ladder)	10 vehicles (7 engines & 3 ladder)	J
Fire Facilities	1 station/ 1.5 mile radius	4 stations	4 stations	0 stations	5 stations	7 stations	J
EMS Vehicles	1 vehicle/ 1.5 mile radius	4 vehicles	4 vehicles	0 vehicles	5 vehicles	7 vehicles	J
Police Personnel	1 Officer/ 500 pop.	46 Officers	24 Officers	- 22 Officers	62 Officers	96 Officers	A
Police Vehicles	1 vehicle/ 1667 pop.	14 vehicles	17 vehicles	+ 3 vehicles	18 vehicles	29 vehicles	A
Police Facilities	1 sq. ft./ 5 pop.	4,620 sq. ft.	0 sq. ft.	- 4,620 sq. ft.	6,160 sq. ft.	9,580 sq. ft.	A
A. Burchell, Robert W. et. al., <i>Development Impact</i> . Washington, DC: URL-the Urban Land Institute, 1994. J. United States Fire Administration. June 1999. L. National Fire Protection Agency. July 1999.							

### **Medical Care**

There are two immediate care facilities in Decatur Township. Emergency or urgent medical options for Decatur Township residents are located outside of the township in either downtown Indianapolis or Greenwood.

Respondents to the needs assessment survey found the availability of emergency room care, in-patient and outpatient medical care to be “excellent or good” (Table 1). Participants of the focus group felt that there was adequate medical care in Decatur Township but had to travel outside of the township for emergency medical needs or as a result of their health insurance provider.

The standards used indicate a sufficient number of physicians, mental health personnel and nursing home beds (Table 8).

Damar has a fairly large staff that provides mental health expertise to children and young adults.

Westview Hospital, a 30-acre out-patient/commercial complex, is under construction on Kentucky Avenue south of Thompson Road. This facility will include doctor’s offices, assisted living and nursing home facilities, hotel/motel and a fitness club.

Sixty-two percent of the respondents of the needs assessment survey felt that there was adequate elderly housing opportunities within Decatur Township.

According to the standards, Decatur Township needs a hospital facility with at least 92 beds (Table 8).

Table 8

MEDICAL STANDARDS							
	Standard	Current Township Need	Current Township Supply (23,100 people)	Current Township Status (+/-)	Township Need in 2020 (30,800 people)	Township Need at Build-out (47,900 people)	Source of Standard and Data
Physicians	1 Doctor/ 3500 pop.	7 Doctors	10 Doctors	+ 3 Doctors	9 Doctors	14 Doctors	H
Dentists	1 Dentist/ 5000 pop.	5 Dentists	1 Dentist	- 4 Dentists	6 Dentists	10 Dentists	H
Mental Health Personnel	1 Profess./ 2000 pop.	12 Profess.	100 Profess.	+ 88 Profess.	15 Profess.	24 Profess.	A
Hospital Beds	1 bed/ 250 pop.	92 beds	0 beds	- 92 beds	123 beds	192 beds	A
Nursing Home Beds	45 beds/ 1000 elderly	49 beds	88 beds	+ 39 beds	65 beds	101 beds	A
A. Burchell, Robert W. et. al., <i>Development Impact</i> . Washington, DC: URL-the Urban Land Institute, 1994.							
H. Indiana Department of Health							



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### *New Development*

Decatur Township is growing. New housing permits have significantly increased in the last five years. In 1998, three hundred and sixty-five new housing permits were issued. According to the Decatur Township Assessor, over three hundred permits have already been issued in 1999. Approximately 1900 units (single and multi-family) are scheduled for development or are currently under construction in Decatur Township.

*Housing Permit Data from 1990-1998 for Decatur Township (Division of Planning, 1999)*

HOUSING PERMITS	
Year	Number
1990	30
1991	69
1992	37
1993	58
1994	25
1995	105
1996	133
1997	265
1998	355

The focus group voiced their concern about the target market for these new homes and would like to attract some higher-income home buyers into the area. According to the survey responses, 76% of respondents from Decatur Township believe there is an adequate supply of affordable housing (Table 1). From 1990-1998, fifty-eight percent of the homes built in Decatur Township were affordable. In 1990, a home valued at \$75,471 and 1998 at \$130,364 was considered affordable for a family of four. During this same time, Decatur Township supplied only 4.7% of the total homes built in the Marion County but provided 9.3% of the affordable homes countywide.

Commercial and industrial developments are also expanding in Decatur Township. The Airport

Business Centre (200 acres) and AmeriPlex (1,500 acres) once completed will include light industrial, commercial and office space.

Participants of the focus group expressed their concern regarding the impact of recent development is having on their infrastructure including schools, parks, roads, water and sewer.

Many residents believe their streets and roads are currently at capacity and have become too dangerous for walking or bicycling. Several roads were identified as needing to be upgraded to accommodate the traffic of additional residential developments as well as the large trucks transporting materials to and from the industrial and commercial developments. These include: Mooresville Road, High School Road, Mann Road, Mendenhall Road, Trotter Road, Camby Road and Kentucky/SR 67.

### *Entertainment*

Much of the focus group discussion centered around the need for better entertainment facilities in Decatur Township. The discussion included: banquet, conference or large meeting facilities, sit-down restaurants, shopping malls and movie theaters. Several focus group participants noted that they travel to Greenwood, Mooresville, Lafayette Square Mall and Plainfield for most of their shopping.

Decatur Township currently has a couple strip malls and shopping centers. These buildings contain a variety of businesses: grocery, pharmacy, clothing store, hair salon, laundromat, bingo hall, garage, banking center and a wide array of fast food restaurants.

The influx of new residential, commercial and industrial development in Decatur Township may drive the market to provide better opportunities for dining and shopping.

Two hundred and fifty acres of the Ameriplex development is zoned for commercial and retail development.

### ***Daycare Facilities***

There are 19 registered daycare providers in Decatur Township in addition to the Early Childhood Education Program offered for 3-5 year olds through the school district. The standard used for daycare suggests that 25% of children between the ages of 3 and 13 require some form of daycare. In Decatur Township, approximately half of those needing daycare are enrolled in licensed daycare programs.

### ***Youth Services and Facilities***

In Decatur Township, youth services are limited outside of the schools. The respondents to the needs assessment survey were split 50/50 when asked if there were adequate youth services near their home (Table 1). The focus group identified the need for a recreation center where children and young adults could socialize and participate in

supervised activities, attend day camps, or receive teen counseling services.

### ***Mass Transit***

Decatur Township has limited bus service. Participants of the survey and focus group agreed that alternative modes of transportation need to be explored. Forty-seven percent of the survey respondents in Decatur Township felt that light rail or buses were “very important” in all areas of Indianapolis. Alternative modes of transportation including bicycling and walking were found to be “somewhat important” to Decatur Township residents. Sidewalks and streets that connect subdivisions were rated as “very important” by 83% of the survey respondents from Decatur Township (Table 1).

Ameriplex is exploring public transportation options to serve their development. Extending or expanding the existing transit route may provide more mobility options for Decatur Township residents.

